

# James DiEugenio – “Vietnam Declassified: Kennedy, Johnson, Nixon”

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The Future of Freedom Foundation hosted one of the most fascinating, important, and relevant conferences in our 27-year history.

Entitled “The National Security State and JFK,” the conference was held on Saturday, June 3, 2017, at the Dulles Airport Marriott in Northern Virginia.

Jim DiEugenio is the author and editor of three books on the assassinations of the sixties. They are the second edition of *Destiny Betrayed* (2012), *Reclaiming Parkland* (2016), and *The Assassinations* (2003). For seven years, from 1993-2000, Jim was also the co-editor of what many considered the finest journal on the subject, *Probe Magazine*. From 2003-2016 he edited the web site, *Citizens for Truth about the Kennedy Assassination*. Today, he is the editor and publisher of the web site *Kennedysandking.com*.

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you James de Eugenio is the author and editor of three books on the assassinations of the 60s they are the second edition of *Destiny betrayed* in 2012 *reclaiming parkland* 2016 and the assassinations in 2003 for seven years from 1993 to 2000 Jim was also the co-editor of what many considered the finest journal on the subject *probe magazine* from 2003 to 2006 then he headed to the website *Citizens for truth about the Kennedy assassination* today he is the editor and publisher of the great website *Kennedy and King Kennedys and king.com* which I highly recommend title of James's talk is *Vietnam Declassified Kennedy Johnson Nixon* please welcome James Jo jinyo it's great when you get to write your own introduction alright um could be foot before I get started on the main topic I I just wanted to talk just a minute or two about what has been declassified about the CIA assassination plots against Castro alright the IG report which was Declassified by the ARB all right said that there was no JFK or RFK involvement or authorization of those plots and they deliberately kept them from the Kennedys the Church

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kept them from the Kennedys the Church Committee came to the same conclusion all right when J Edgar Hoover briefed RFK on the plots for the first time he said he got extremely upset when he heard about this stuff he demanded a CIA briefing and the CIA briefer said the longer we talked the more he ground his teeth and the job all right he then called in Richard Helms all right and basically read him the riot act now during the church committee hearings when Helms was asked about this he conveniently forgot the meeting and so the briefer said but wait a second here is our case appointment book isn't that your name right there isn't at the time you were there and you still don't remember what he told you okay if see you can do that stuff after somebody's dead all right the CIA then lied to Bobby Kennedy and said the plots were over when they were actually ongoing at the very time of the briefing and they knew it all right now when US this is 54 years pass to JFK case if anybody has made a credible case of Castroville Kennedy I somehow missed it and I've been doing this stuff for 30 years okay I think after 54 years it's expiration with sap to the limitations all right if you

can't make your case in 54 years and I think you don't have one all right okay all right before I get started the last three and a half years I've spent in my life studying Kennedy's foreign policy outside of Vietnam and Cuba because nobody even knew that he had such a thing so I studied things

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had such a thing so I studied things like the Middle East I studied things like Egypt I study things like Africa I studied things like Indonesia all right and I came to the conclusion that you can't look at Vietnam or Cuba isolated because Kennedy had a foreign policy the day was inaugurated all right and then as he goes on you can see it manifests itself it's all of a dish salt you know everything in a place but the reason I got back to Vietnam because there's been a lot of documents Declassified about these other two guys I think one way you find out about a president is not just qualitative analysis it's by comparative analysis how's he compared with the guys that came before him and I was in compared with the guys who came after him all right these were the most current the most current numbers I could find this is based upon a 2008 British study all right the number on the left is the military the number on the right is the total civilian and military now if you're throwing Cambodia which I think you have to add another million all right it's clearly I believe the greatest foreign policy American disaster of the 20th century all right and I don't think there's anything else it even really comes close all right now I particularly like that image because it conveys what the mainstream media your picture of Vietnam for about 20 years that the guys in a State Department the eastern elite us got together with the whiz kids in the Defense Department and we supplied into this inevitable tragedy all right well something happened to

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all right well something happened to screw up that image and that was one day mr. X met mr. garrison at a park bench in Washington and mr. axe Fletcher Prouty said in the fall of 1963 I was working on Kenny's withdraw plan from Vietnam all right which was a thousand man withdraw at the end of the year and everybody all the other advisories come back by 1965 now there was a serious problem with what mr. X was saying and that is it was a violation of halen sears Daniel Halen was an historian who wrote a wonderful book called the uncensored war where he studied seven years of news stories on Vietnam War and he came to the conclusion this is the way the mainstream media works you have inside the circle this is conventional wisdom or the accepted story and anybody even if it's false because Lyndon Johnson I lied his eyes out about the Gulf of Tonkin but they reported as if it was true it doesn't matter it's the accepted story by the official story the reporters then he said outside that you have an area of debate and he said something like the invasion of Cambodia would be something you get the two talking heads you know the left-right Democratic whatever you want to call him all right and they talk about whether the Cambodians Asian was good or not all right but he said and this is the most important discovery he said there's an area of deviance which is not accepted even if it's true okay it doesn't matter you ain't getting on here with that story well that's what happened to my buddy you hear mr. stone

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happened to my buddy you hear mr. stone when he put this it is movie right and so what happens he starts getting attacked alright here's George Lardner in the Washington Post seven months before the movie premieres talk about killing the kid in the crib okay that's unheard of all right and so he George Lardner made a very interesting comment in his column he said there was no evidence for an abrupt change between Kennedy and Johnson on Vietnam he didn't say where he got the information because he's in that inner circle he doesn't have to prove it okay all right and so here's here's my question this was not based upon some fantasy it was based upon this okay is MCM to 63 which had been Declassified one year before and he had it because John Newman was a technical adviser on the movie all right and he was about to publish his revolutionary book JFK and Vietnam and Wow Fletcher Prouty had worked on this plan alright in fact I don't know how many people know this but the McNamara Taylor report which this is based on was not written by Marisa mirin Taylor it was written by Prouty and Victor cruel act in Washington under the direct

supervision of Robert Kennedy at the request of President Kennedy because he didn't trust them to bring back the information he needed to begin with the withdrawal all right so this was invited when they got it in Hawaii it was already bounded those guys were not going to change anything all right and then they jet it in and they read it on the way in now the firestorm about this movie cause I'm sure everybody knows just the creation of the ARB and in my opinion one of the

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of the ARB and in my opinion one of the most single most important documents if I had to put together a top ten this would be in there all right is the record of the SEC def conference May of 1963 this is when McNamara would bring in all these guys from Vietnam into Honolulu CIA State Department kind of gone all right and he would get a status report except this one he wasn't getting a status report he was getting a progress report because Kennedy had already started the withdrawal program and McNamara was a guy who was doing it so apples meaning he is checking on these withdrawal schedules all right we're going to turn this thing over to Vietnamese we're getting out of here all right and once he gets all the schedules do you know what he says too slow we got to speed it up all right now I don't have enough time to go into why he said that but that but that is what he said now this evidence was so powerful that it knocked over Halen's fears which is an unbelievable event look what happens the New York Times you know says Kennedy had it would roll lamp The Philadelphia Inquirer says but guess what The Washington Post didn't say anything okay the best way to deny you were defeated is not to say anything all right all right now the mainstream media relied a lot upon David Halberstam 1972 book all right the but it was a massive bestseller 1.8 million copies all right and this is this is where the idea of the inevitable tragedy you know something we couldn't avoid all right and today this is what

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avoid all right and today this is what he says this is how McNamara got tagged with this being McNamara's war all right next KAG writes that McNamara had no different assumptions than the Pentagon did well if you're asking the Pentagon to get the heck out of Vietnam I think you have different ideas and what the Pentagon did all right but obviously either he didn't do enough digging all right are we talking to the wrong people all right because there were a lot of people doing a lot of cya you know when he's writing this book here's some more evidence that this was McNamara's withdraw plan the Kennedy entrusted this is a conversation between Taylor Kennedy Bundy and McNamara October the second he's describing the withdraw plan right there Bundy says what's the point of doing it then that's the important part of this conversation which I'll return to now I don't see how much more clear you can get than that okay so you've got in Sam 263 you've got the SEC desk meeting you got this all right but George larger knows better all right now the takeaway line is the middle one all right now why is that so important because when Bundy read this he was preparing a book called lessons in disaster with his biographer Gordon Gordon Goldstein and he read this and he says I think I know what happened Kennedy knew that I was too much of a hawk on Vietnam and he didn't trust me to do this so he went through mcnamara

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to do this so he went through mcnamara to go ahead and implement the withdraw plan and we know that's for a fact today because kennedy was very upset in November of 1961 when the big two-week debate took place in the White House about whether we're going into Vietnam or not he was essentially the only guy saying no and he said you guys why are you comparing this Korea this is not Korea this is not an aggression from North Korean to the south this is a civil war all right you don't want to get in the middle of something like this right and so he went ahead and he told John Kenneth Galbraith to go to Saigon and write a report because he knew what Galbraith would come up with all right and so Galbraith comes up is essentially you know in his typical writing because what the heck are you doing in this country you know there's no way we're going to win this thing all right and so he then calls Galbraith Ian in April and says I want you to give that report to McNamara and you tell him I told you okay so he's one witness Roswell killed Patrick

McNamara's assistant is another witness who said McNamara told him that Kennedy gave him orders to wind down the war John McNaughton another McNamara assistant says the same thing all right and then I already told you about Bundy unfortunately passed away before the book was finished now what happened after Kennedy's assassination well this is what happens right Johnson is a new sheriff in town and he makes it very clear to McNamara that he doesn't like what he was doing all right cuff smacking ear off and says and that's the key statement at the bottom because we read that you can't loot you

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because we read that you can't loot you can't cut no war you're losing see the difference is Kennedy Kennedy South Vietnam was not a part of national security interest the United States you know what Johnson it was it was a part of it we can't lose it economies no matter where it is all right and McNamara should have quit right after that because two weeks later this is really amazing Johnson wants him to write a memorandum saying that you didn't really mean those things you said back in October of 1963 all right even though it's all right there in black and white he wants him to take it all back because in what's happening here of course is that Johnson realizes he's breaking with Kennedy's policy and he wants to blur the line all right and what happens is that the Kennedy holdover is in the White House they understand what he's doing so there's a meeting at Roland Evans house Johnson gets wind of it and he says these guys are saying I'm putting the Vietnam War on Kennedy still which is exactly what he was doing all right but he doesn't want anybody to realize that so what happens of course is that one by one all these guys start quitting and McNamara is the last guy to leave and somehow the press doesn't realize it these a Vietnam War is spinning out of control and all these guys are leaving the White House maybe it's because they don't agree with what Johnson's doing you know so then O'Donnell and Powers were and make it explicit in this book they spend about seven pages going over this Johnson's Vietnam policy was not Kennedy's Vietnam policy and they actually discussed in Sam 263 and they say that Johnson reversed it which is

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say that Johnson reversed it which is what he did all right now Richard Nixon always used to say I'm not going to blame Vietnam on Kennedy and Johnson like that's how we got there all right this is how we got there these are the four guys who got us into Vietnam all right the Dulles brothers Ike and Richard Nixon and it's very simple to understand is that they began to subvert the Geneva accords which ended the first French Indochina war all right they went ahead and they made up this country called South Vietnam which did not exist they made the 17th parallel permanent which was never supposed to be and they got rid of the French stand in both I and they put in their stand in the Golden Gym right and that's how we got into this thing whenever I read this it really stuns me no matter how many years it goes by could anybody be more wrong in this you know denne been flew was a blessing in disguise that really takes the cake doesn't it for Eastern establishment arrogance yeah but before Diem bamboo fell Dulles was going to intervene by bailing out to besiege French garrison with Operation Vulture which was a massive air armada which included three atomic bombs all right and then when Eisenhower vetoed it he tried to give the bombs of the French themselves any simple ways we use these things we're going to blow up our guys at the same time we blow up those guys you know so forget it we don't want any more today Richard Nixon is actually the

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more today Richard Nixon is actually the sky could find who actually advocated for entering American combat troops into Vietnam he actually said this during the siege of the unbend Phu and says if the French lose we should go ahead and commit Americans because it's going to be an utter disaster you know those South Vietnamese presents are pretty powerful country they're going to take Indonesia the Philippines Australia and everything else yeah okay when when Oliver Stone made this movie Richard about Nixon at the time he made this which I was 1994 you started at something time okay at that time very few people notice when Nixon left office his buddy Gerry Ford actually gave him control over his papers and tapes and he could do anything he could literally incinerate them if he wanted to well when Congress heard about this

they said this is outrageous all right he had to resign so they passed a law saying that the National Archives going to take control of it Nixon didn't like that so he hired a whole fleet of lawyers to fight that decision until the day he died in 1994 so when he starts this movie he only has three percent of the audio tapes and only 15 percent of the papers have been Declassified and it's just 20 years after Nixon left office all right so well I'm now I'm going to show you why Nixon did that I would have done the same thing oh by the way you know Henry Kissinger was a movie critic now take a look the LA Times let him review Oliver's movie this will be like Jim Garrison reviewing JFK yeah which I don't think they were going to let that fight it out all right when Nixon gets into office Kissinger passes out to study memorandum from everybody everybody responds to including Abrams who was replacement for miss Morland all right and they all said

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miss Morland all right and they all said this is hopeless this is a stalemate all right but yet Nixon still expands the war way beyond what Johnson what was doing and he starts carpet bombing Laos in Cambodia and he invades both countries all right now what's the reason for that because he had learned at the foot of John Foster Dulles Dulles called it the uncertainty principle he called madman theory okay if you do enough irrational stuff you know and unpredictable stuff the other side will just give in except it wasn't going to happen this time all right and then Kissinger has this great quote well we down anything which bomb Cambodia all right it's always great when you get it on tape you know because he's got chant denying what he said this idiotic stuff you know for the first time see this was the burning problem knows the longer the war went on the more the army disintegrated colonel robert heinel wrote an article in 1971 examining the phenomenon of fragging x' at least in his movie you could justify what Charlie Sheen did these are just guys who are not going to be orders anymore all right and take a look at this 500 cases in three years how can you run an army when that many people are muting you know and eat during the Christmas bombings some of the pilots refuse to fly because the Soviets were giving to North Vietnamese very sophisticated anti-aircraft equipment okay now I know how many people read this book meal I was the biggest example of what happened to the civilians in Vietnam there were many many other cases smaller-scale which happened which the

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smaller-scale which happened which the Pentagon decided to either deep-six two documents or not bring charges against the military officers all right now I had the unfortunate experience of reading this book all right in his book see this this book could only be written in secrecy it could never have been written with the Declassified record he says in there that neither him or Kissinger ever seriously considered bombing the dikes are using atomic weapons well we have him Kissinger his assistants that he did think of using atomic weapons for interdiction purposes at the Chinese past but here is another audio tape during the Easter offensive when the North is threatening to take over the south alright I'm just again you were seeing it you know ain't look what it this way when Kissinger has to head you off hey what was were you coming from in you know alright now next thing that come to this conclusion even earlier in 1968 that there was no way to win the war so what happened is they then decided on the decent interval strategy what this was is that Saigon can fall but our guys can't be there when it happens we have to have an interval between us leaving and Saigon collapsing and by the way Kissinger even wrote this in a briefing book with the Chinese because this is what he told the Chinese of course with

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what he told the Chinese of course with the Chinese gonna tell they're going to tell the North Vietnamese alright why why did he demand a decent interval Nixon refused to be the first president to lose a war sort of like Johnson's rationale also we can't let this fourth rate country defeat the United States alright everybody remembers this image right the last day United States and Vietnam that evening Henry Kissinger called up an old friend from the academic circles and said we should have never been there well true but I think got there little late Henry okay I kind of prefer this guy who said this in 1952 all right no amount of American

military assistance in Indochina can conquer an enemy which is everywhere at the same time nowhere an enemy of the people which has a sympathy in covert support of the people 35 years old there's your foreign policy visionary and hasn't been anybody like him since in the White House and I don't think that's an accident [Applause] [Music]

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